



Placer County Conservation Plan

Overview of Presentation

Background on the status of the PCCP and preparation of a revised conservation strategy

Key elements of the conservation strategy

Conservation and Mitigation objectives

Responses to Wildlife Agency comments

Next Steps

Recommendations



Placer County Conservation Plan

The Scope of Regulatory Coverage

The PCCP will provide 50-year permit coverage for the following permits:

- Incidental Take Permit – FESA
- Incidental Take Permit – CESA
- Master Streambed Alteration Agreement

The PCCP will provide incremental 5-year permit coverage for the following permits:

- Programmatic Water Quality Certification
- Issuance of Programmatic General Permit and Letter of Permission Procedures

Placer County Conservation Plan

2060 Growth Scenario

Projections for PCCP Economic Analysis 2007 2060 2007-2060

Phase 1 Area (Including Non-Participating Cities)

Jobs by Place of Work	149,000	445,000	296,000
Housing Units	118,000	290,000	172,000
Total Population	294,000	748,000	454,000

Participating Agencies Pop./Emp 2007-2060

Total New Population	224,000
Total New Jobs	153,000
Total New Households	90,000

The PCCP will cover the endangered species and wetland impacts for the 90,000 new homes and the 153,000 jobs that will be created over the next 50 years.



Placer County Conservation Plan

PCCP Impacts - 2060

Over the 50-year permit term, potential future growth in the Plan area may convert up to 57,000 acres of land for urban, suburban, and rural residential development. The PCCP proposes to establish a Reserve System of 25,000 to 46,000 acres which will augment the 16,000 acres of existing reserve lands in western Placer to provide long term conservation for natural communities and covered species.

Existing Land Use in the Plan Area		
Land Use Type	Area (ac)	Percentage of Total
Urban and Suburban	17,639	8%
Rural Residential	30,526	14%
Agriculture - Cropland	25,840	12%
Agriculture - Rangeland	79,349	37%
Forest/Natural Land	53,504	25%
Open Water	5,075	2%
Total	211,933	100%



Placer County Conservation Plan

PCCP – A Cooperative Effort

PCCP Participating Agencies:

- Placer County
- PCWA
- City of Lincoln

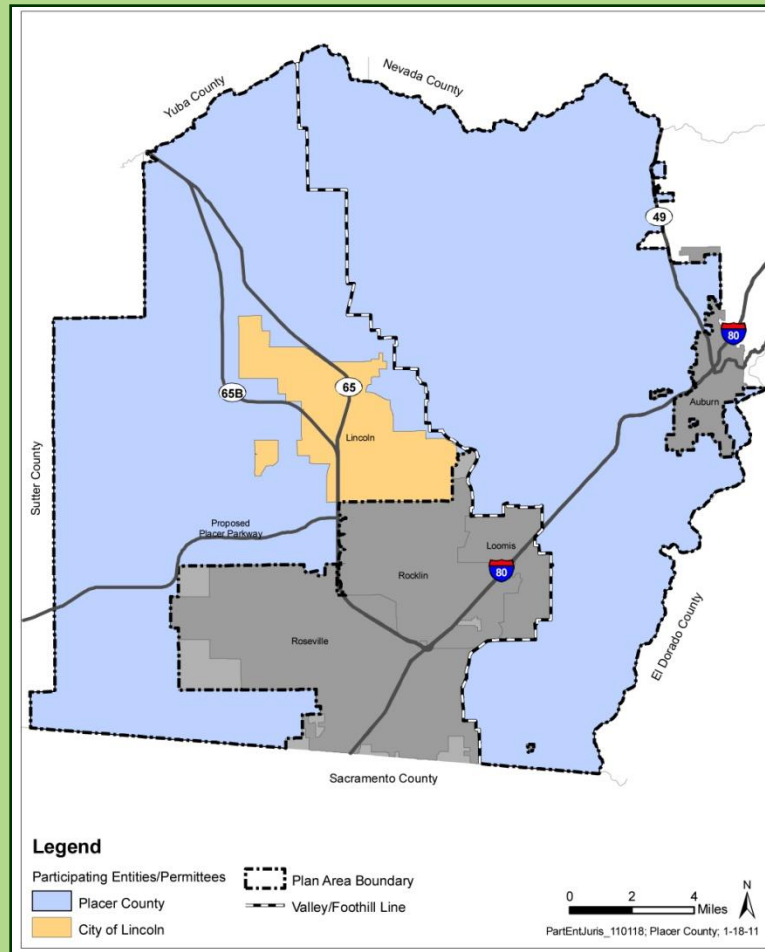
At this time SPRTA is not included for coverage in that the Placer Parkway Project is now being processed by Placer County DPW.

Regulatory Coverage for:

- Placer Parkway
- Public infrastructure
- Conservation Activities
- Cumulative and indirect impacts associated with the conveyance, distribution of water
- Land Development in Unincorporated Western Placer County and City of Lincoln

Placer County Conservation Plan

PCCP Coverage Area



The PCCP covers the unincorporated area and the City of Lincoln for all areas west of Supervisorial District 5.

Placer County Conservation Plan

Background

In June of 2005 the Wildlife Agencies provided a letter to Placer County which described the need to prepare a conservation strategy which would identify the, “location and specific acreage objectives of conservation lands”.



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Loren Clark
Assistant Planning Director
Placer County Planning Department
11414 B Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Mr. Clark:

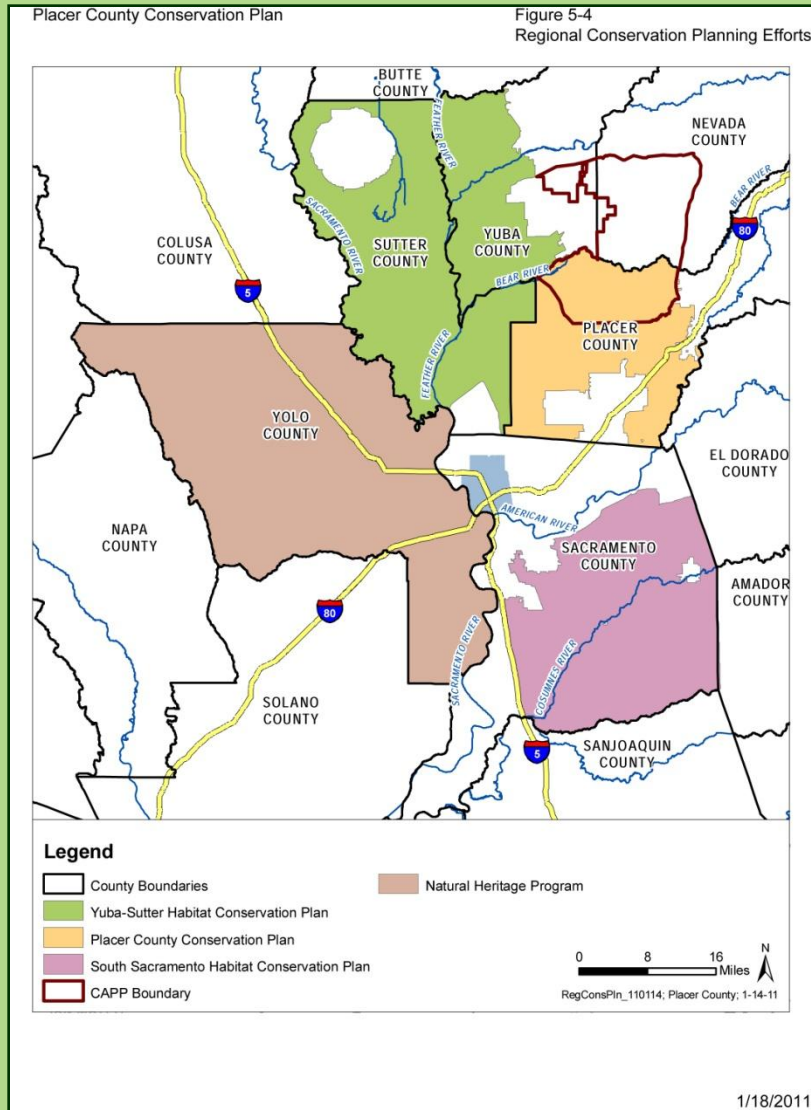
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) (collectively, the Wildlife Agencies) have reviewed the Agency Review Draft of the Placer County Conservation Plan (PCCP), Western Placer County, dated February 22, 2005 (hereafter the Agency Review Draft). This plan is the first of three comprehensive, multi-species plans for the County, and is called the Phase 1 PCCP. The Agency Review Draft provides a framework for completion of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) pursuant to Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) (16 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq.) and a Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) pursuant to the NCCP Act (Fish & G. Code, § 2800 et seq.) for the Phase 1 PCCP Planning Area in Placer County. The Phase 1 PCCP encompasses approximately 221,000 acres in the western portion of the County from the valley floor to the foothills of the Sierra Nevada near the City of Auburn. The Phase 1 area includes significant natural resources, including stream environments, vernal pool grasslands, grasslands, oak woodland, and associated listed species, sensitive species and a diverse array of other wildlife species. At Placer County's request, our review focuses on, but is not limited to, issues relative to the proposed conservation strategy in the Agency Review Draft of the PCCP.

The Wildlife Agencies share the opinion that, at this juncture, the Agency Review Draft does not yet meet the regulatory standards in the ESA or the NCCP Act. We underscore, however, that solutions to all the issues identified below are feasible if Placer County and the plan participants continue to work closely with the Wildlife Agencies. We stand ready to assist in that effort in a collaborative and productive manner, and stress that a successful conservation strategy in Placer County is a high priority for the Wildlife Agencies.

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PCCP Coverage Area – Regional Conservation

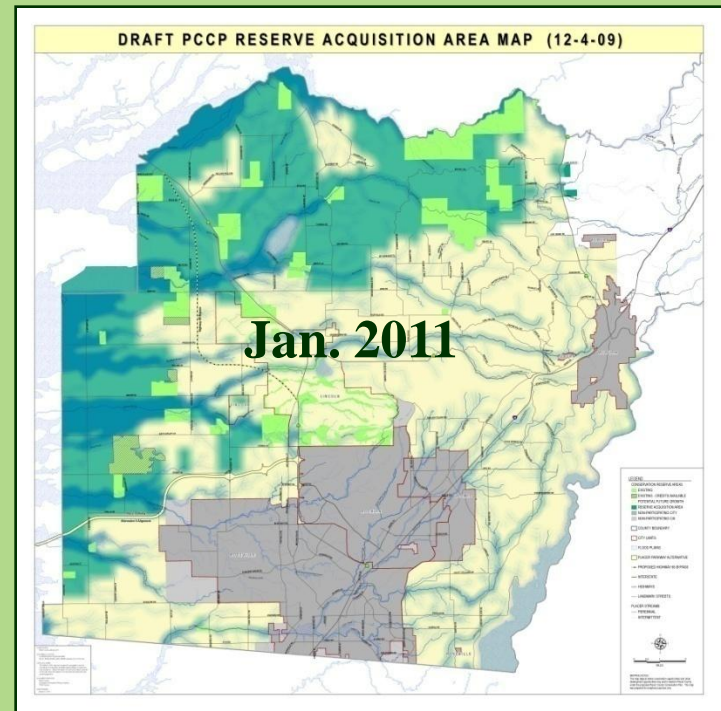
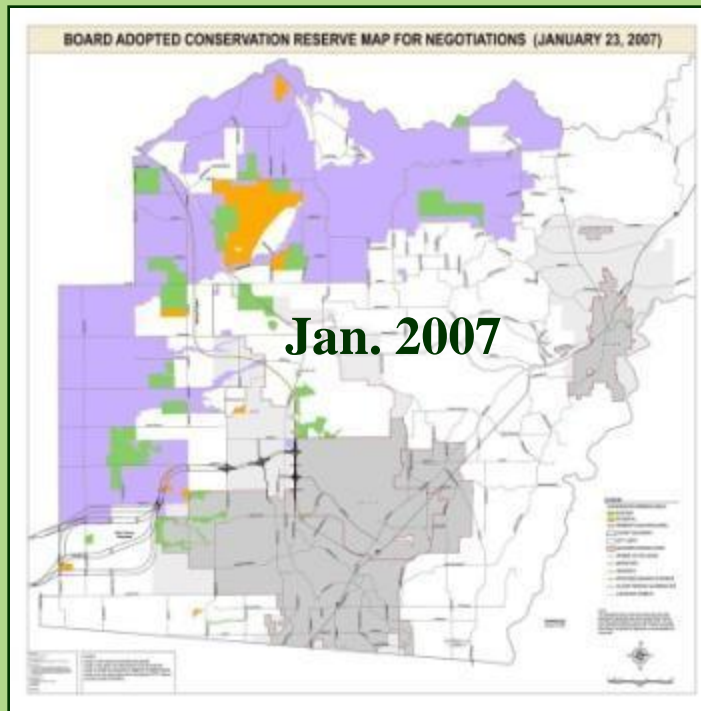


The PCCP is now one of four major conservation efforts in the Sacramento Region including efforts in Yolo County, Sacramento County, and a joint effort in Sutter/Yuba County.

Placer County Conservation Plan

A Revised Conservation Strategy

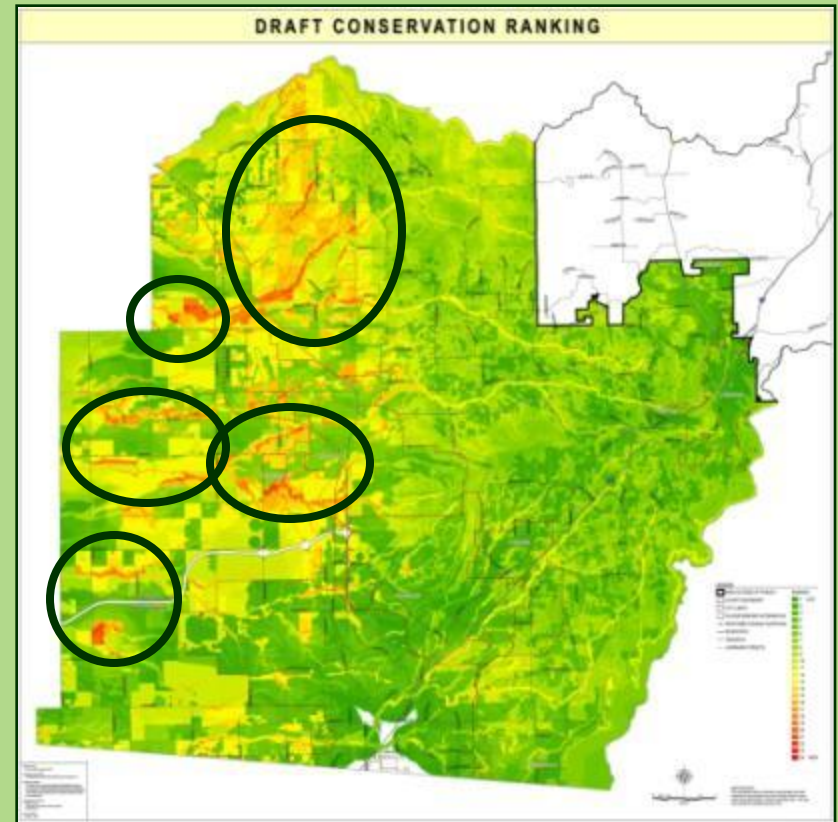
After a significant amount of deliberation, County staff, the Ad Hoc Committee and the Biological Stakeholder Working Group have reviewed a revised Conservation Strategy for consideration by the Resource Agencies.



Placer County Conservation Plan



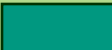


PCCP – Conservation Priorities

Higher value areas were identified in the landscape by considering species richness, proximity to growth, proximity to other conservation lands, the size of the parcel and many other factors.

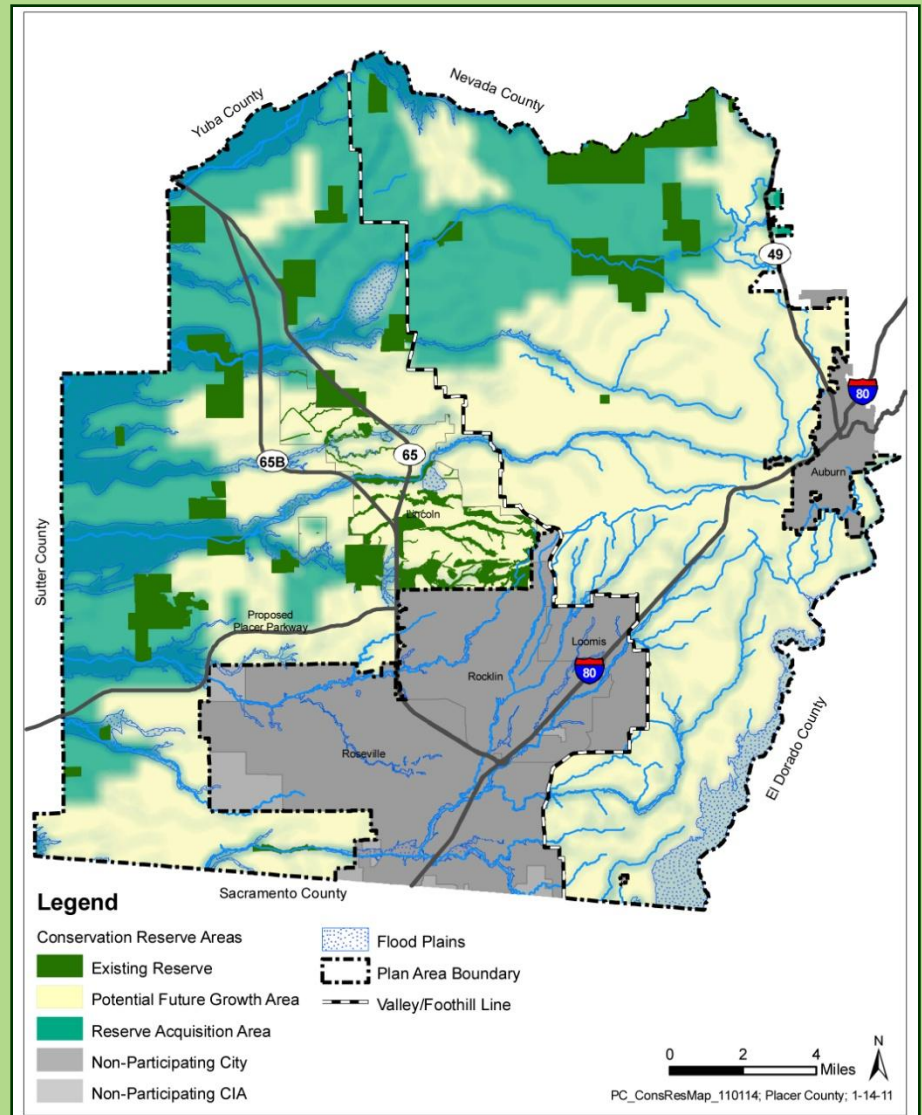


Placer County Conservation Plan

Proposed PCCP Conservation Map - 2011

-  = Stream System
-  = Existing Conservation
-  = Proposed Reserve Area
-  = Development Opportunity Area
-  = Non-participating City

Proposed Conservation Map



Placer County Conservation Plan

Proposed PCCP Conservation Map - 2011

Attributes of the Proposed Reserve Map

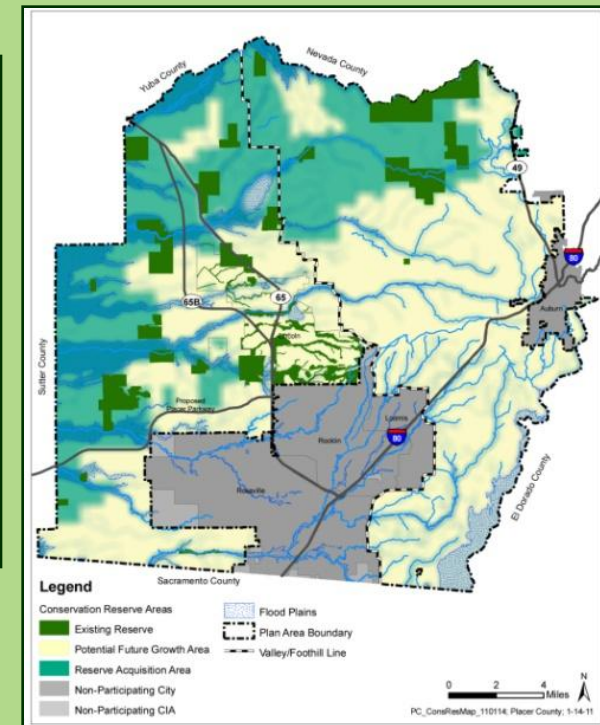
Existing Protected Lands: 16,231 acres

Reserve Acquisition Area: 79,664 acres

Potential Future Growth Area: 117,897 acres

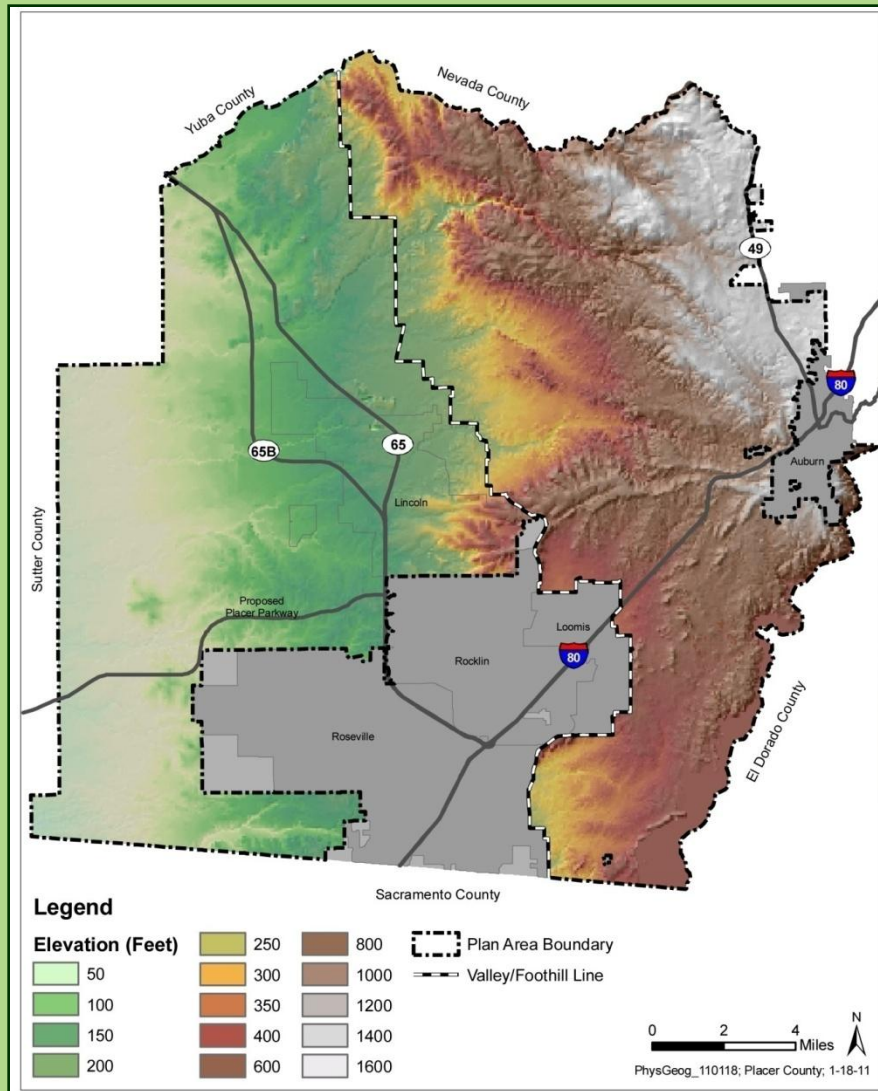
Vernal Pool Preservation Ratio: 1:1.02

Landscape Level Vernal Pool
Preservation Objective: 50% min.



Placer County Conservation Plan

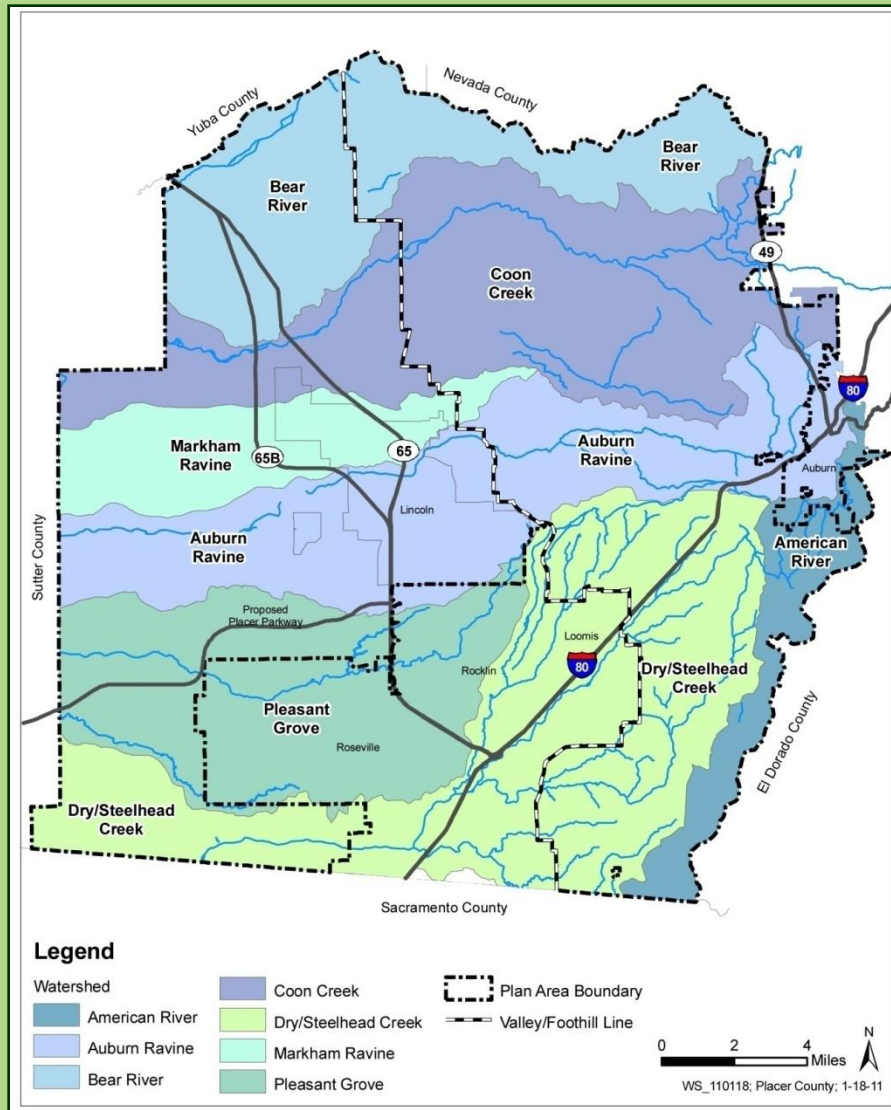
PCCP Key Elements – Physical Geography



The PCCP covers the foothills from around 1500' in elevation to the valley floor and is bordered by two major rivers (Bear and the American) and is bisected by a number of east-west flowing streams.

Placer County Conservation Plan

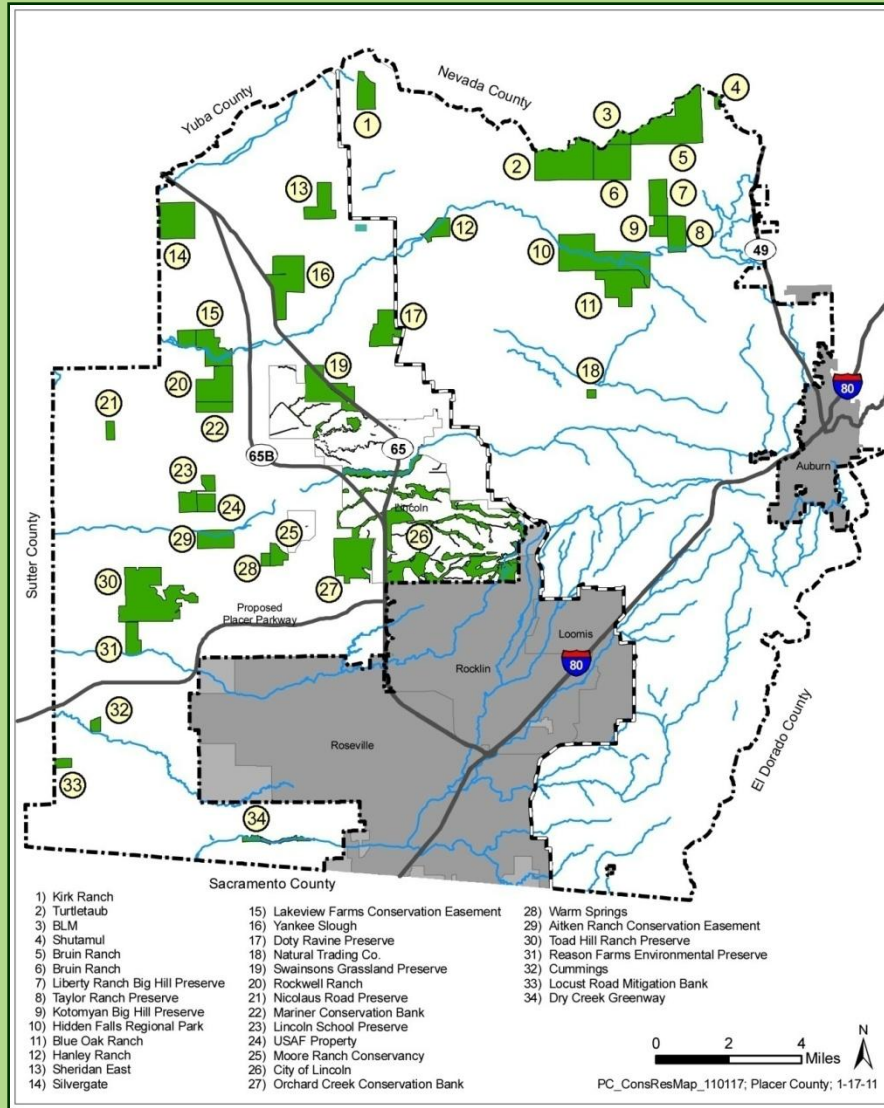
PCCP Key Elements - Watersheds



The revised PCCP also evaluates the landscape from the perspective of watersheds and how ecosystems function, not just political boundaries and parcel boundaries.

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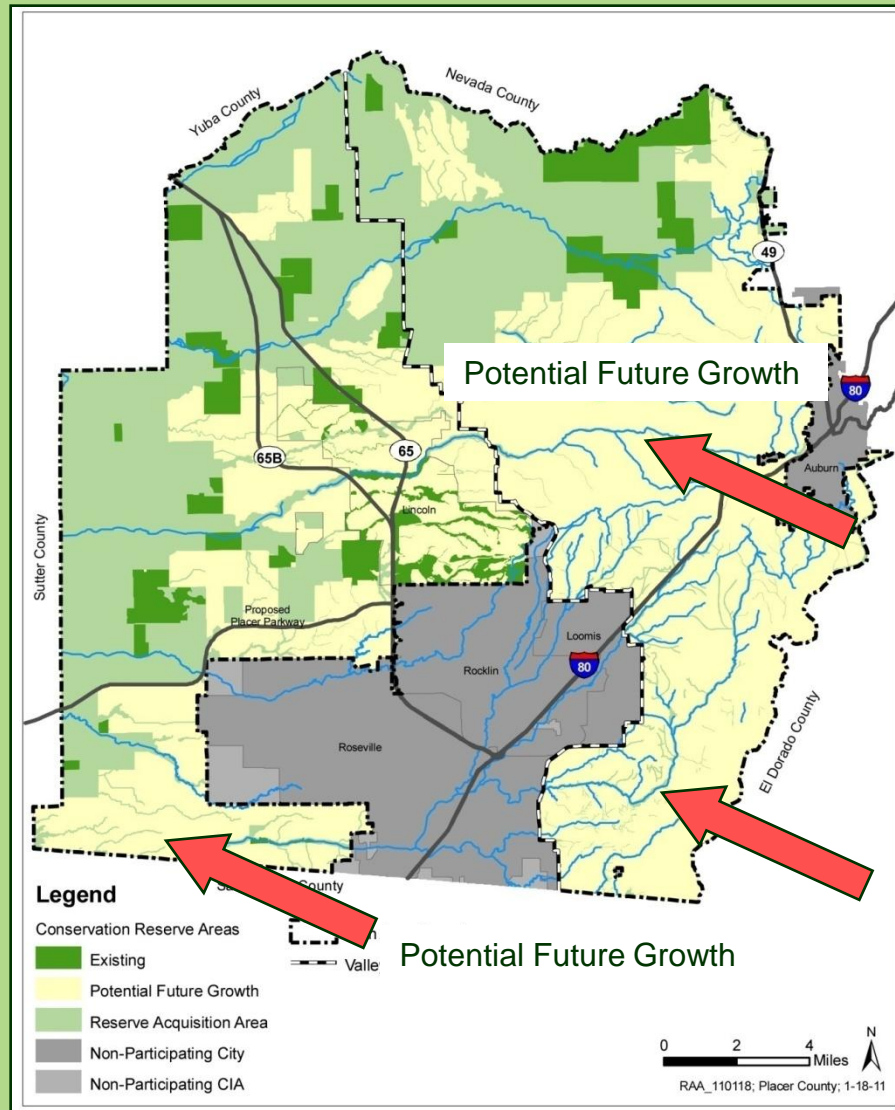
PCCP Key Elements – Existing Conservation



The revised PCCP also incorporates a number of areas that are already preserved today through Placer Legacy, the Placer Land Trust, mitigation and conservation banks and other conservation efforts.

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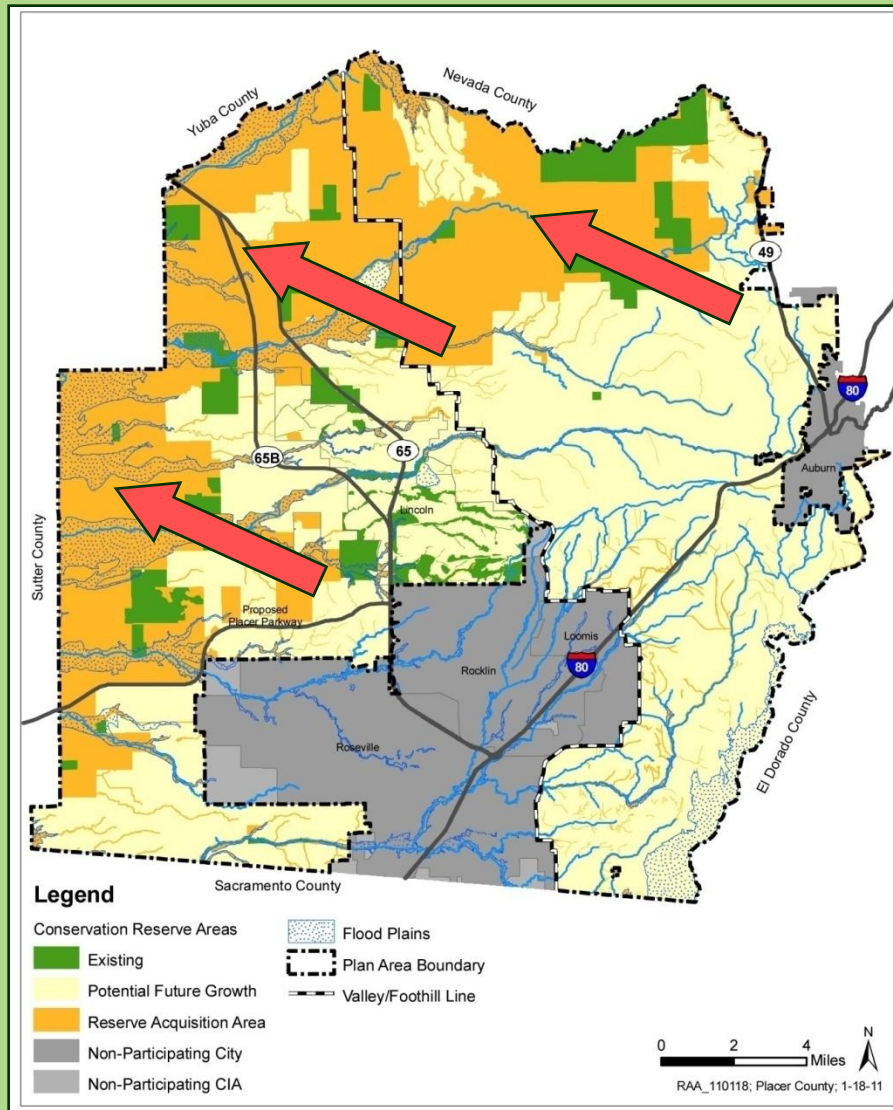
PCCP Key Elements – Potential Future Growth



A key difference between the current PCCP and the 2005 draft is the provision of a map that specifically depicts where conservation activities will occur and where growth is anticipated. High-end estimates assume 57,000 acres of land converts between now and 2060.

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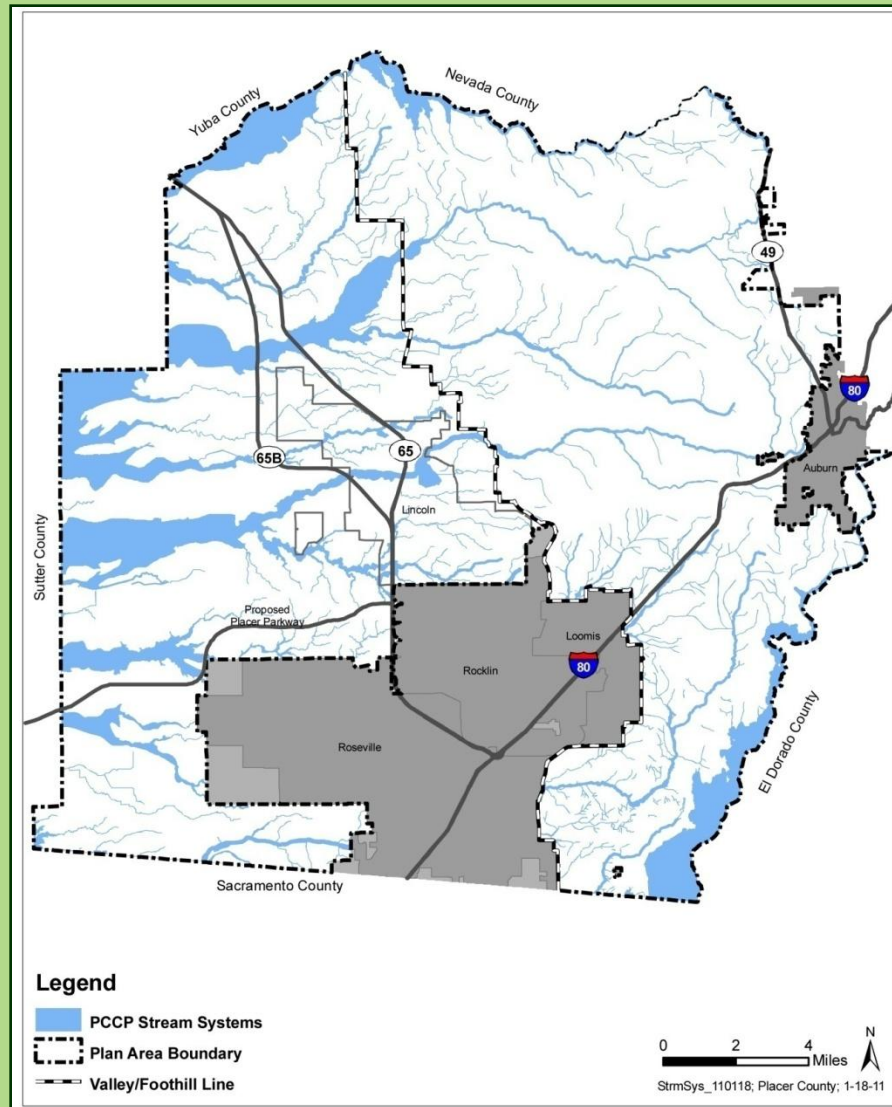
PCCP Key Elements – Reserve Acquisition Area



The current PCCP depicts a 70,000+ acre reserve acquisition area that identifies a region within which lands would be acquired and in some cases restored to account for the 57,000 acres of anticipated impacts.

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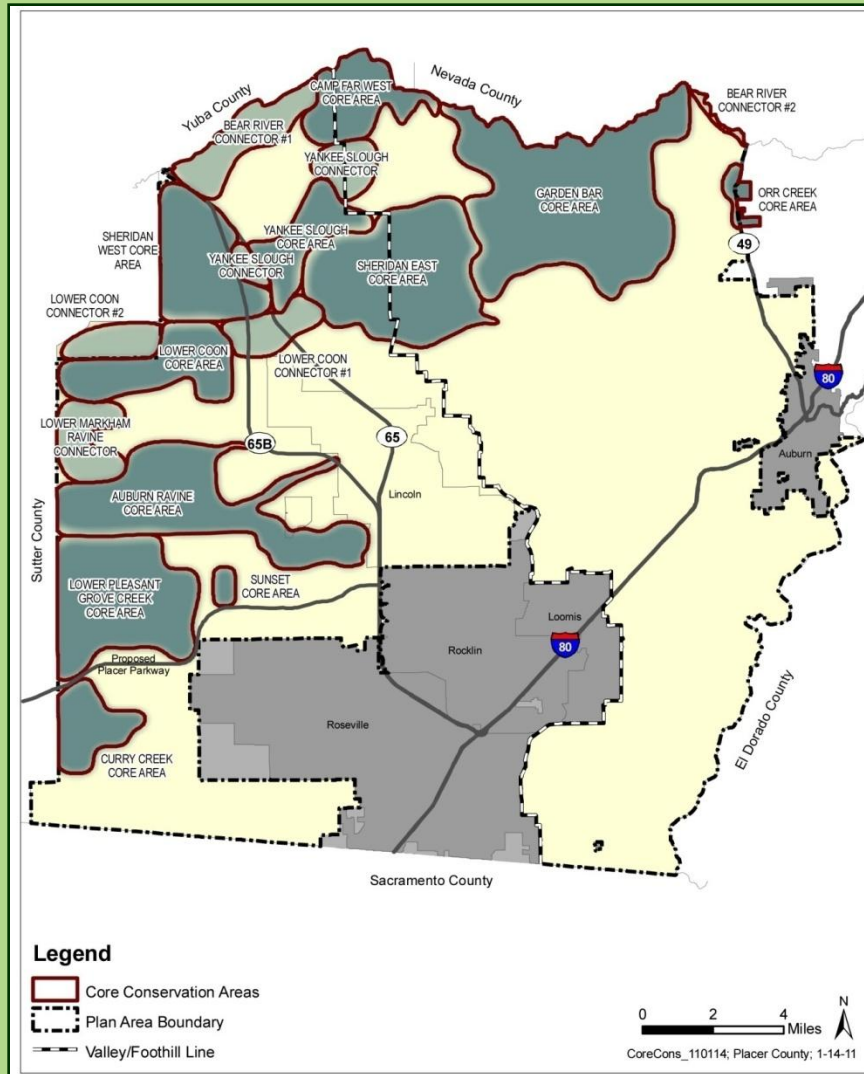
PCCP Key Elements – Stream System



The PCCP also includes the “Stream System” in the conservation strategy. The Stream System is comprised of the 100-year floodplain and/or a stream setback/buffer area where land conservation and restoration activities would occur.

Placer County Conservation Plan

PCCP Key Elements – Core Conservation Areas



The PCCP identifies areas within the Reserve Acquisition Area that have different priorities including areas that emphasize conservation, linkages, wildlife corridors or large blocks of conserved land.



Placer County Conservation Plan

PCCP – Habitat-Based Conservation Priorities

Oak Woodlands:

Valley oak: conservation, regeneration, and restoration

Blue oak: conservation, regeneration, and fuel load management

Montane hardwoods: conservation, regeneration, and fuel load management

Vernal Pool Grasslands:

Vernal pool wetlands: conservation and compensatory replacement

Vernal pool grasslands: conservation, restoration/enhancement

Non-vernal Pool Grasslands: conservation and fuel load management

Riparian: conservation and restoration

Freshwater Wetlands: conservation and compensatory replacement

Streams: improved water quality (use of Low Impact Development Standards, sediment controls and water temperature)



Placer County Conservation Plan

PCCP – Conservation Ratios

For the majority of the conservation efforts associated with the PCCP, the emphasis is on land conservation, i.e., setting aside and managing land of equal or greater value than lands impacted through development. Compensatory mitigation, where habitats are actually replaced, is limited primarily to wetland/riverine habitats. The following conservation ratios have been prepared:

<u>Blue Oak Woodlands:</u>	1.1:1 conservation ratio
<u>Valley Oak Woodlands:</u>	3:1 conservation ratio
<u>Vernal Pool Grasslands:</u>	1.35:1 conservation ratio
<u>Vernal pool wetlands:</u>	1:1 conservation ratio
<u>Non-vernal Pool Grasslands:</u>	1.35:1 conservation ratio
<u>Riparian:</u>	3:1 conservation ratio
<u>Freshwater Wetlands:</u>	1:1 conservation ratio
<u>Streams:</u>	1:1 conservation ratio



Placer County Conservation Plan

PCCP – Mitigation Ratios

As opposed to “conservation”, the “mitigation” requirements call for the actual replacement of lost habitat through the restoration/re-creation of habitat that is lost. This is statutorily required by the Federal Clean Water Act to insure no net loss of wetlands. The following mitigation ratios are incorporated into the PCCP:

Vernal pool wetlands: 1.25:1 mitigation ratio

Riverine: 1.25:1 mitigation ratio

Freshwater Wetlands: 1.25:1 mitigation ratio

Seasonal Wetlands: 1.25:1 mitigation ratio

For these particular habitats, these ratios are in addition to the conservation ratios already required.

Placer County Conservation Plan

PCCP Costs - One time & Ongoing

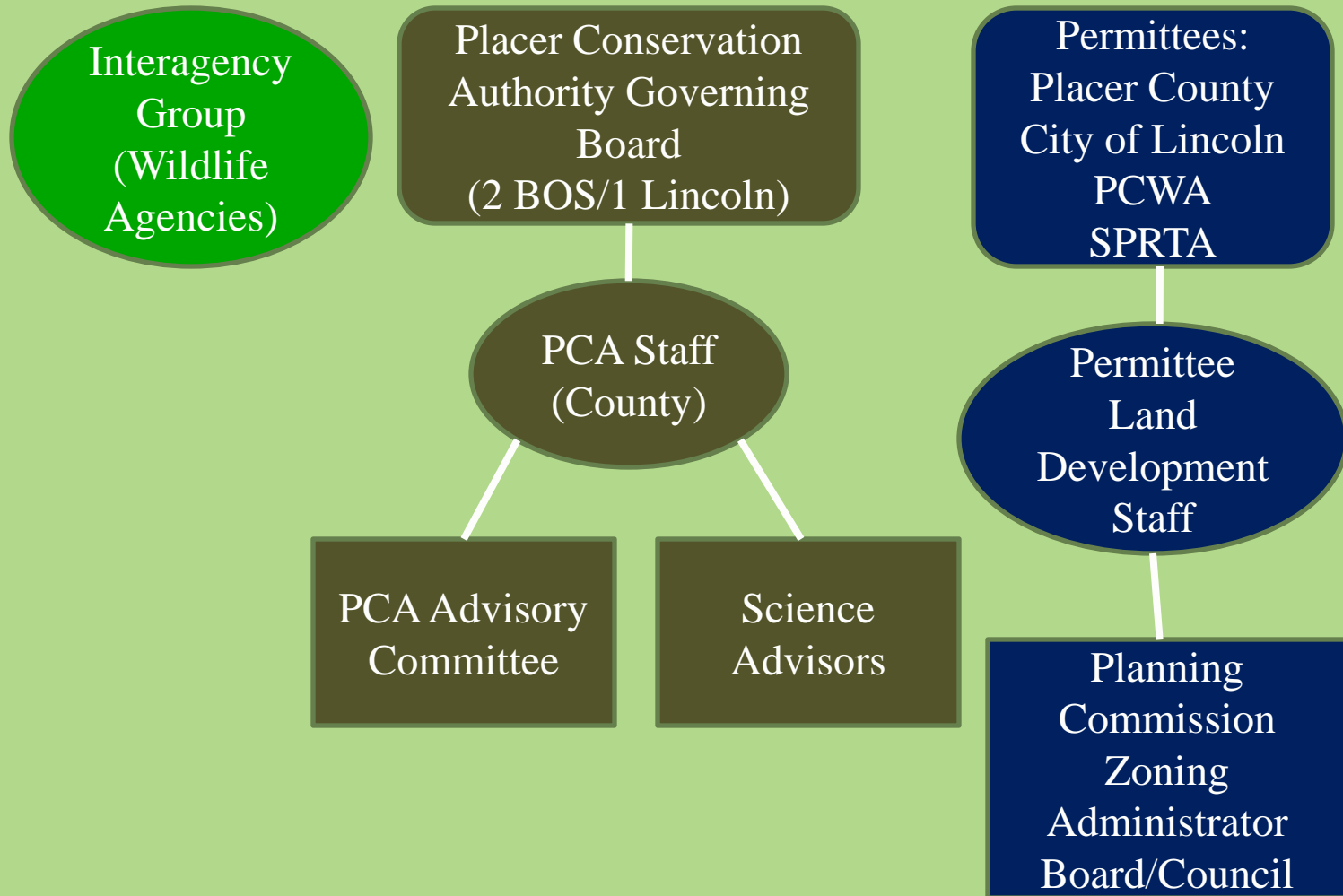
Estimates of PCCP One-time Costs through 2060 (2008 dollars)		
	Local Mitigation	State/Federal Conservation
Land Acquisition	\$1,283,000,000	TBD
Restoration	\$151,000,000	TBD
Contingency (10%)	\$143,000,000	TBD
Total One Time Costs	\$1,577,000,000	TBD

Estimates of PCCP Ongoing Costs through 2060 (2008 dollars)			
Cost Category	2010	2035	2060
Program Administration	\$780,000	\$626,000	\$630,000
Land Management	\$859,000	\$3,084,000	\$4,814,000
Restoration Management	\$384,000	\$632,000	\$676,000
Monitoring, Research, and Adaptive Management	\$582,000	\$1,396,000	\$2,041,000
Contingency (3%)	\$78,000	\$172,000	\$245,000
TOTAL	\$2,383,000	\$5,910,000	\$8,406,000

With the exception of potential funding associated with covered County activities, no direct County funding of plan operations is anticipated.

Placer County Conservation Plan

PCCP Governance



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments – A Response



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The balance of this presentation focuses on how the County has revised the document to respond to the Wildlife Agencies' prior comments.



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments

“....solutions to all the issues identified below are feasible if Placer County and the plan participants continue to work closely with the Wildlife Agencies. We stand ready to assist in that effort in a collaborative and productive manner, and stress that a successful conservation strategy in Placer County is a high priority for the Wildlife Agencies.”

Response: The Wildlife Agencies have devoted considerable public resources to completing this effort. While there are substantial issues to be addressed, they continue to provide excellent staff support and demonstrate a willingness to work with the County on identifying solutions as they arise.



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments

The general focus of the Agency Review Draft should be redirected from a mitigation strategy to a conservation strategy that contributes to recovery of covered species in the planning area.

Response: Even though implementation of the plan is based largely on mitigating the impacts of covered activities and on funding allocated proportional to those impacts, the plan that emerges after 50 years conserves the important and large natural communities in the western Placer County landscape; not just that land that is necessary to mitigate impacts on covered species.

The previous Agency Review Draft primarily accounted for the strict relationship between the take of a sensitive species and the compensation for that loss through the application of a number of fixed ratios. That strategy has been amended.



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments

The historic development pattern in the County carried forward in the Agency Review [PCCP] Draft is likely not compatible with a viable conservation strategy.

Response: While the conservation strategy does not establish a build-out condition for western Placer County, it does insure that there is a clear demarcation between development and conservation in a manner that is permanent and not subject to future modification (as compared to urban limit lines and land use buffers).

With landscape scale conservation and restoration and suitable buffering, the County and City of Lincoln can achieve a balance in the landscape that is different than the historical trends of growth and conservation.



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments

The conservation strategy should be further refined to include specific conservation measures, the location and specific acre objectives of conservation lands, and to focus on conservation of existing high value habitats.

Response: The PCCP Reserve Map is the product of an analytical and stakeholder review process. While such mapping is not parcel specific, it does designate large areas of the County to be considered for future conservation. This map, coupled with an analysis of the data prepared to support the PCCP has resulted in the development of specific and measureable objectives.

The plan provides for the conservation of a suitable amount of land to insure ecological viability irrespective of the amount of take that is occurring on listed species.



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments

Proposed retention of 30% of the growth area in natural habitat as part of the conservation strategy may not be viable or feasible.

Response: The revised PCCP conservation strategy specifically discourages an avoidance-based strategy within the areas where development is expected to occur.

To be avoided:

- 1) The avoided area must be a minimum of 200 acres in size and manageable in perpetuity for its conservation values;
- 2) The avoided area may be smaller than 200 acres if it is associated with a protected stream corridor;
- 3) The avoided area may be smaller than 200 acres in size if it is adjacent to an existing conserved property;
- 4) Small avoided areas in the future urban environment are possible when located in the Stream System.



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments

The conservation strategy relies too heavily on restoration and creation of vernal pool grasslands -- Reliance on parcels as small as 200 acres for conservation purposes within the urban matrix may not be viable.

Response: The proposed conservation strategy is based upon the avoidance of large tracts of vernal pool grasslands within a larger landscape of interconnected reserve lands. Onsite avoidance of vernal pool grasslands is not considered a viable option unless the area is a minimum of 200 acres in size and it is clear that the protected area can be suitably managed in perpetuity as part of the reserve system.

The Conservation Strategy does rely upon restoration as an important element including the restoration of vernal pools on existing grassland communities in the reserve area.



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments

Exclusion of parcels of less than 20 acres from mitigation obligations related to oak woodlands and grasslands is not appropriate.

Response: The PCCP conservation strategy has been modified to account for impacts on rural residential properties dominated by oak woodlands and grasslands in the foothills and valley floor, including those parcels less than 20 acres in size. In all cases, a parcel is exempt if it is less than one acre in size (although tree ordinance requirements may still apply and impacts on wetlands or streams will still apply). The ratio of replacement is 1.1:1 for oak woodland impacts in the foothills and 1.35:1 for all natural and semi-natural landscapes on the valley floor. Because of their rarity and potential threats, valley oak woodlands are mitigated at a ratio of 3:1



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments

The designation and use of the Development Opportunity (DO) area, Conservation Opportunity (CO) area, and Conservation Management Units (CMU) lack clarity, consistency, and purpose.

Response: The conservation strategy has been revised to remove these designations. The primary concern was the lack of a geographic understanding of where conservation activities were going to occur because the original conservation strategy did not include a reserve map. These earlier terms were used to organize the information that was used to identify impacts and the amount of mitigation that would be required.



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments

The cost share assumptions of the permittees and the State and Federal governments are not yet appropriate.

Response: County staff and consultants continue to update the costs associated with the implementation of the PCCP and to develop a proposed funding plan. Chapter 9 and Appendix J and K of the new conservation strategy provides background information on these costs and how the plan can be funded. A PCCP finance plan will be prepared and finalized once we reach agreements on the final conservation strategy. The cost share assumptions will be more developed, with the participation of the stakeholders and the Agencies during the development of the finance plan.



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments

Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) 5-point policy issues, as they pertain to the Phase 1 PCCP, should be presented or summarized together in a section of the PCCP

Response: Staff, working with the Wildlife Agencies will insure that the 5-point policy guidance is adequately addressed in the PCCP.

Staff is also working to insure that the PCCP Conservation Strategy is compliant with numerous other state and federal statutes.



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments

The biological goals and objectives lack measurability.

Response: The revised objectives are based upon the needs of species covered by the plan. No fixed standards are driving the development of the conservation strategy at this time. It was important to insure that the conservation of the vernal pool landscape met a minimum of a 1:1 standard and this ratio was carefully evaluated during the preparation of map alternatives.

The biological needs of the covered species were considered and then new ratios were derived. The new objectives will be measurable because they are based upon known and predicted conditions represented on the reserve system map.



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments

The Monitoring and Adaptive Management components of the conservation plan need to be further developed.

Response: Chapter 7 - Adaptive Management and Monitoring - has been written in order to provide information on how ongoing land management and restoration activities will be monitored to insure that the PCCP meets its biological goals and objectives. Chapter 7 also provides the method by which monitoring results will be applied to management activities, including the adaption of management activities to changes that occur in the environment.



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments

A Changed and Unforeseen Circumstance section needs to be developed.

Response: Chapter 10 - Assurances, has been specifically prepared to address changed and unforeseen circumstances. Additionally, Chapter 7 - Adaptive Management and Monitoring, provides the method by which monitoring and adaptive management will insure that PCCP management activities are responsive to changing circumstances.



Placer County Conservation Plan

Wildlife Agency Comments

Current information is needed regarding plan financing, which is not included in the Agency Review Draft as noted in the County's letter to the Wildlife Agencies dated March 4, 2005.

Response: The revised Agency Review Draft, Chapter 9, provides background information that will serve as the foundation for a finance plan. Appendix J provides detailed information on the cost model which is used to determine one time costs (land acquisition and restoration) and ongoing costs associated with administration and land management/monitoring. Additionally, Appendix K of the attached conservation strategy contains two important reports on funding: 1) *Local Government Impacts of the Placer County Conservation Plan*, and 2) *Preliminary PCCP Financing Plan Discussion, 2005*. A complete finance plan will be prepared once the conservation strategy has been accepted.



Placer County Conservation Plan

Status of the Work Program – Next Steps

Ad Hoc Committee

- Initiate review of the finance plan background material.
- Initiate review of governance options
- Initiate review of Corps of Engineers MOU to implement 404 permitting
- Initiate review of the Implementation Agreement

Consultants and Staff

- Coordinate the review of the agency review draft conservation plan
- Public outreach
- Initiate the preparation of the EIR/EIS and finance plan
- Continued coordination with stakeholders



Placer County Conservation Plan

Board of Supervisors - Recommendations

1. Direct staff to submit the revised conservation strategy to the Wildlife Agencies in response to their June 2005 letter.
2. Direct staff to continue to discuss PCCP conservation strategy alternatives with key stakeholders
3. Direct staff to initiate the preparation of the EIR/EIS, Finance Plan, and Implementation Agreement.
4. Authorize the Chairman to sign the attached cover/response letter (Exhibit C) addressed to the State/Federal Wildlife Agencies.